

# ***PARKS PERSPECTIVE***

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**Montana Department of Fish,  
Wildlife and Parks  
*Parks Division***





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# PARIS PERSPECTIVE

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE  
ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE  
OF THE CITY OF PARIS



MARCH 1988

FY 1987

# **PARKS PERSPECTIVE**

**March 1988**

***Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
Parks Division***

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Sketches by Len Eckel





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1. NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

2. ADDRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION

3. CITY AND STATE

4. TITLE OF THE PROJECT

5. DATE OF THE PROJECT

6. NAME OF THE PROJECT LEADER

7. NAME OF THE PROJECT MEMBER

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## **Administrator's Perspective**

Both in the field and in the office, we who manage Montana's Parks Program believe that the natural, cultural, and recreational resources in our care are of high value. We are committed to making our stewardship of these irreplaceable products of Montana's land and history as productive as possible.

That can be accomplished with vision, dedication, and pragmatic day-to-day management, even in the face of tight budgets. Strategies outlined in the Action Plan section of the 1987 *Parks Perspective* were designed to meet that challenge and I am pleased to report that we made significant progress on all of them. For example:

- The budget was restructured and the funding sources realigned to clearly identify which constituency benefits and pays for activities at each site and within each program. Fiscal audits by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the state legislative auditor again confirmed that our fiscal management is sound and appropriate.
- We applied to the budget an earned revenue formula so that sites earning revenue have a significant portion credited back to their budgets.
- Redrafts of State Park System goals, missions, site classifications, and program structure were completed. These are currently being refined for formal adoption.
- Drafts of policy guidelines for selection, development, and operation of park system areas were prepared. They will be implemented following review and revision.
- Draft maintenance standards were developed and major maintenance project criteria are being used to allocate heavy maintenance funds.
- Money and manpower were redirected to deferred maintenance construction projects at high priority sites.
- Risk management policies for both the parks system and snowmobile program were developed.
- We developed and implemented a parks enforcement plan; it appears to be aiding in gaining compliance with regulations and in site control.
- We increased fee collections by installing self-service pay stations and controlled entrances at several parks.
- We developed statewide signing standards and implemented use of a signing policy manual.
- While lauded by state associations for our weed control efforts, we continue moving toward contracting this effort so that our employees can be marshaled for other activities.
- Capitol grounds maintenance contracting procedures were refined and an underground utilities base map completed.
- The equipment purchasing process was centralized and prioritized.

The Helena office was reorganized into two bureaus, Program Development and Operations. Department-wide support functions of the Land Unit, Design and Construction Bureau, and the Sign Shop were transferred at the end of the fiscal year to the Field Services Division to enable us to focus attention on high priority responsibilities. Helena area field activities were reassigned to Region 4 and the Fishing Access Site policy development moved to the Fish Program. The Parks Division continues to provide site maintenance and consultation, but the Fisheries



Division now takes the lead for developing and guiding the program.

As we prepare for the 1989 legislative session, we will continue to evaluate our activities and priorities in an effort to focus resources in the short term on places and things that matter in the long term. We will develop new partnerships using volunteer programs and other creative means of accomplishing our work. We will be evaluating

our role among governmental recreation providers in the state to better define our place along that continuum.

Thank you, Parks Division employees, for your creative and dedicated contributions to our program. Without you, virtually none of it would have occurred. With your continued dedication, the Action Plan for 1988, briefly described on page 21, will be carried out as a result of your continuing efforts.





## NEW LEGISLATION

The 50th Legislature (1987) passed the following bills which affect the Division:

**SB 139 (Chapter 440) – Snowmobilers Responsibility and Liability Act.** The purpose of this legislation is to clarify the distribution of liability among snowmobilers, landowners, operators, and the department. It establishes a standard of care for those involved in providing snowmobile recreation and shifts more of the liability responsibility to snowmobilers themselves. Parks and Conservation Education Divisions incurred responsibility for providing safe trails and public information and education programs. A Hazard Management Plan has been developed for this purpose.

**SB 228 – Coal Severance Tax Distribution.** This bill placed a cap on the earnings of the parks acquisition and cultural trust fund portion of the Coal Severance Tax for fiscal years 1988 and 1989. It allows earnings to grow only after June 30, 1989 in the amount of 1.9% of the total distribution, with 1.27% allocated to Parks. Therefore, the Parks portion of the fund will remain static with the level of operations funding for fiscal year 1988 and 1989 based only on the amount of interest earned.

**SB 329 – Revisions to Natural Areas Act of 1974.** This bill revised the procedures by which the Department of State Lands maintains an inventory of natural areas. The bill also defines a state natural area and procedures for nomination and establishment on privately-owned and state-owned lands.

**HB 2 – General Appropriations Bill for the 1988–89 Biennium.** Contained in this bill is the department's budget plan for reorganizing the Parks Division. This includes a reorganization of funding sources within the Parks Division and the transfer of the Sign Shop, Land Unit, and Design and Construction Bureau to the Field Services Division. It also transferred responsibility for Helena area parks from Parks administration to a Region 4 Helena Area Parks Manager.

**HB 84 (Chapter 607) – User Tax on Hotel, Motel, and Campground Accommodations.** This bill enacted a 4% tax to promote tourism in Montana through the Department of Commerce and a new Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research. Four percent of existing campground fee collections must be remitted quarterly to the Department of Revenue. The impact upon the parks system currently amounts to a decrease of approximately \$7,000 annually in our earnings from camping fee proceeds.

**HB 136 (Chapter 20) – Gas and Diesel Fuel Tax Increase.** This bill increased the fuel tax from \$ .17 to \$ .20 per gallon. This amounts to an approximate \$150,000 annual increase to the department's budget for the Snowmobile Program and increased maintenance activity at sites where motorboating is allowed.

**HB 152 (Chapter 486) – Tax-Exempt Status for State Park System Lands.** The intent of this bill is to maintain the tax-exempt status of lands within the State Park System and to address housekeeping matters regarding county tax billing processes. The bill applies retroactively to June 30, 1986 to correct wording in an earlier law which mistakenly removed the tax-exempt status.

**HB 607 – Statewide Sign Inventory.** This bill requires the Department of Commerce to prepare a statewide inventory and comprehensive plan for a system of highway signs related to tourism. The Parks Division will recommend to the Department of Commerce that funding be provided to upgrade highway signing and develop signing standards and records of sign installations.

**HB 738 (Chapter 255) – Establishment of Montana Agricultural Center and Museum at Fort Benton.** This bill established department control of the museum site which was purchased with Parks Coal Tax funds. However, it also required the department to lease the site to the City of Fort Benton for a token \$1 fee.



# STATE PARK SYSTEM AND FISHING ACCESS SITE VISITATION

Total visitation to areas managed by the Parks Division during calendar year 1986 was calculated at over 4.8 million visits, a 5% increase over 1985 visitation.

**Table I**  
**Annual Visitation**

Calendar Year	Visits	% Change From Previous Year
1984	4,550,100	+ 1%
1985	4,610,200	+ 1%
1986	4,824,500	+ 5%

Ticket sales for cave tours at Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park, a major indicator site in the State Park System, showed a 2 percent increase over 1985. Combined with the calculated five percent increase in statewide visita-

tion, this would indicate an overall statewide increase in visitation between 1985 and 1986. Visitation is calculated primarily through the use of electronic traffic counters maintained by the Parks Division and the Montana Department of Highways.

**Table II**  
**LEWIS AND CLARK CAVERNS STATE PARK**  
**Tour Ticket Sales**

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Total
Calendar Year 1984	4,220	9,310	18,179	16,244	4,139	52,092
" 1985	4,412	9,484	16,164	14,686	3,447	47,936
" 1986	3,628	9,400	17,351	15,652	2,762	48,793

At parks where fees are charged, traffic counter data indicated that visitation from the Friday before Memorial Day weekend through September 30, 1986 was 1,336,100. Overnight visits made up 12% of this total or 158,100.

Total visitation at all areas during this time period was determined to be 4,195,200. Overnight visits accounted for 13% of the total or 558,900 visits. Visitation for the entire year is estimated to be 15% higher than seasonal visitation. This would result in a total of 4,824,500 visits during 1986 as shown above.

Overnight ticket sales indicated that in 1986, 58% of the visitors to parks where fees are collected were residents of Montana. It is assumed that a similar percentage applies to statewide visitation. In 1986, areas managed by the Parks Division received visits from every county in Montana, every state in the Union, and from Canada and several European and Asian countries.

Complete visitation information for State Park System areas and fishing access sites from 1980 through 1986 can be found in the State Parks Visitation Manual, available from the Helena Parks office.

## LAND CONTROL

Moved to the Field Services Division at the end of fiscal 1987 (see staffing charts on pages 9 & 10), the Land Section is responsible for acquisition and disposal of all lands for

the Department. Table III below, summarizes the Department lands under control of the Parks Division at the end of the fiscal year.

**Table III**  
**Division Land Summary**

Type of Area	Number of Sites 7/1/86	Number of Sites 6/30/87	Total Acres 6/30/87
--------------	---------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------

State Parks	11	11	15,369.53
State Monuments	20	24	6,510.52
State Recreation Area	80	81	9,911.22
Fishing Access Sites	232	248	20,469.76
 *Total	 343	 364	 52,261.03

(\*NOTE: These figures do not include a State Recreation Road, a Recreational Trail located in Sluice Boxes State Monument, or five Recreational Waterways.)

As can be observed, a number of new Fishing Access Sites were acquired. A few were developed sufficiently to allow public use and several are under consideration for development with other than Parks funds during the next biennium.

The Land Section was also involved in negotiations and transactions resulting in the addition of two affiliated and one Parks system sites. Tabulated below is summary information on all acquisitions completed during fiscal 1987.

**Table IV**  
**Acquisitions from July 1, 1986 to June 30, 1987**

DATE	SITE NAME	SITE TYPE	COUNTY	ACREAGE	COST	
86/07/03	Cyr Bridge	Fishing Access	Moneral	9.89	\$ 38,300	
86/07/03	Cyr Bridge	Fishing Access	Mineral	.25	-0-	lease
86/08/05	Mt. Agricultural Center and Museum	unclassified	Choteau	3.69	250,000	leased back to City of Ft. Benton
86/08/06	Myers Bridge	Fishing Access	Treasure	15.00	-0-	lease
86/09/23	Gartside	Fishing Access	Richland	80.00	50,000	
86/09/24	Anaconda Smokestack	State Monument	Deer Lodge	10.00	-0-	long term lease
86/09/24	Glasgow Base Pond	Fishing Access	Valley	16.17	1,667	
86/10/08	Indian Road	Recreation Area	Broadwater	14.37	31,000	
86/10/09	Notch Bottom	Fishing Access	Beaverhead	14.00	60,000	
86/10/17	Burleigh	Fishing Access	Fergus	68.87	171,000	
86/10/30	Diamond Willow	Fishing Access	Richland	100.00	25,000	
86/10/30	Kinsey Bridge	Fishing Access	Custer	27.67	20,750	
86/12/04	Centennial Acre II	unclassified	Roosevelt	1.00	-0-	donation
86/12/17	Mayflower Bridge	Fishing Access	Jefferson	20.00	30,000	
86/12/22	Rock Creek Cons. Easement	Fishing Access	Missoula	129.62	60,000	
86/12/23	Mallards Landing	Fishing Access	Big Horn	39.20	78,400	
86/02/11	Dry Canyon Boat Camp	Fishing Access	Meagher	320.00	100	lease
87/02/11	Unnamed	Fishing Access	Ravalli	5.00	-0-	
87/03/05	Carter Ferry	Fishing Access	Choteau	.83	-0-	lease
87/04/21	East River Bridge	Fishing Access	Yellowstone	1.28	-0-	lease
87/04/21	Riverside Park Boat Ramp	Fishing Access	Yellowstone	25.00	-0-	lease
87/05/08	Ridgetop Boat Camp	Fishing Access	Meagher	30.00	300	lease
87/05/13	Broadus Bridge	Fishing Access	Powder River	2.90	-0-	lease
87/05/18	Rattlesnake Bend Boat Camp	Fishing Access	Cascade	10.00	300	lease
87/06/25	Somers	Fishing Access	Flathead	2.00	-0-	lease



# OPERATIONS BUREAU

Split from the responsibility of the Assistant Administrator in March 1986, the Operations Bureau completed its first full fiscal year providing guidance, technical advice, and monitoring of day-to-day operations. This included administering the Division field operations budget, regional parks personnel, and acting as the Division's weed control liaison. Until June 30, 1987, this Bureau also supervised the Department Sign Shop and the Helena area field operations of Canyon Ferry Reservoir, Spring Meadow Lake, and State Capitol Grounds.

## **PARKS DIVISION PERSONNEL**

During fiscal year 1987, the Parks Division had 98.32 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions of which 51.61 were permanent employees and 46.71 were seasonal. Helena-based personnel occupied 22.65 FTE and 75.67 FTE were in the field.

The Division's total FTE dropped by 1.29 from the previous year due to reductions required to fund mandated salary and benefits increases. However, permanent personnel increased by 1.52 FTE while seasonal and temporary decreased by 2.81 FTE, reflecting the Division's increased commitment to professionalism despite budgetary cutbacks (see personnel chart on following page).

## **PERSONNEL CHANGES**

### **Promotions and Transfers:**

Cheryl Nelson: from seasonal position to Parks Operations Specialist I, Canyon Ferry.

Lisa Jepson: from Secretary II, Parks Administration, Helena, to Administrative Secretary, Parks Administration, Helena.

Tammy Ryan: from Administrative Aide I, Conservation Education Division, to Secretary II, Parks Administration, Helena.

Mark Soderlind: from Parks Operations Specialist I, Canyon Ferry, to Parks Operations

Supervisor, Blackfoot River.

### **Resignations and Retirements:**

Geri Brusett: Administrative Secretary

Paul Pacini: Planner II, Planning and Project Bureau, Helena.

Don Malmberg: Parks Operations Supervisor, Blackfoot River.

On July 1, 1987, the reorganization plan for Helena Parks Administration took effect. Personnel and equipment of the Design and Construction Bureau, the Land Section, and the Whitehall Sign Shop were transferred to the Field Services Division. Helena area operations are being decentralized from Helena to a Region 4 Helena area office. The second personnel chart exhibits the new structure.

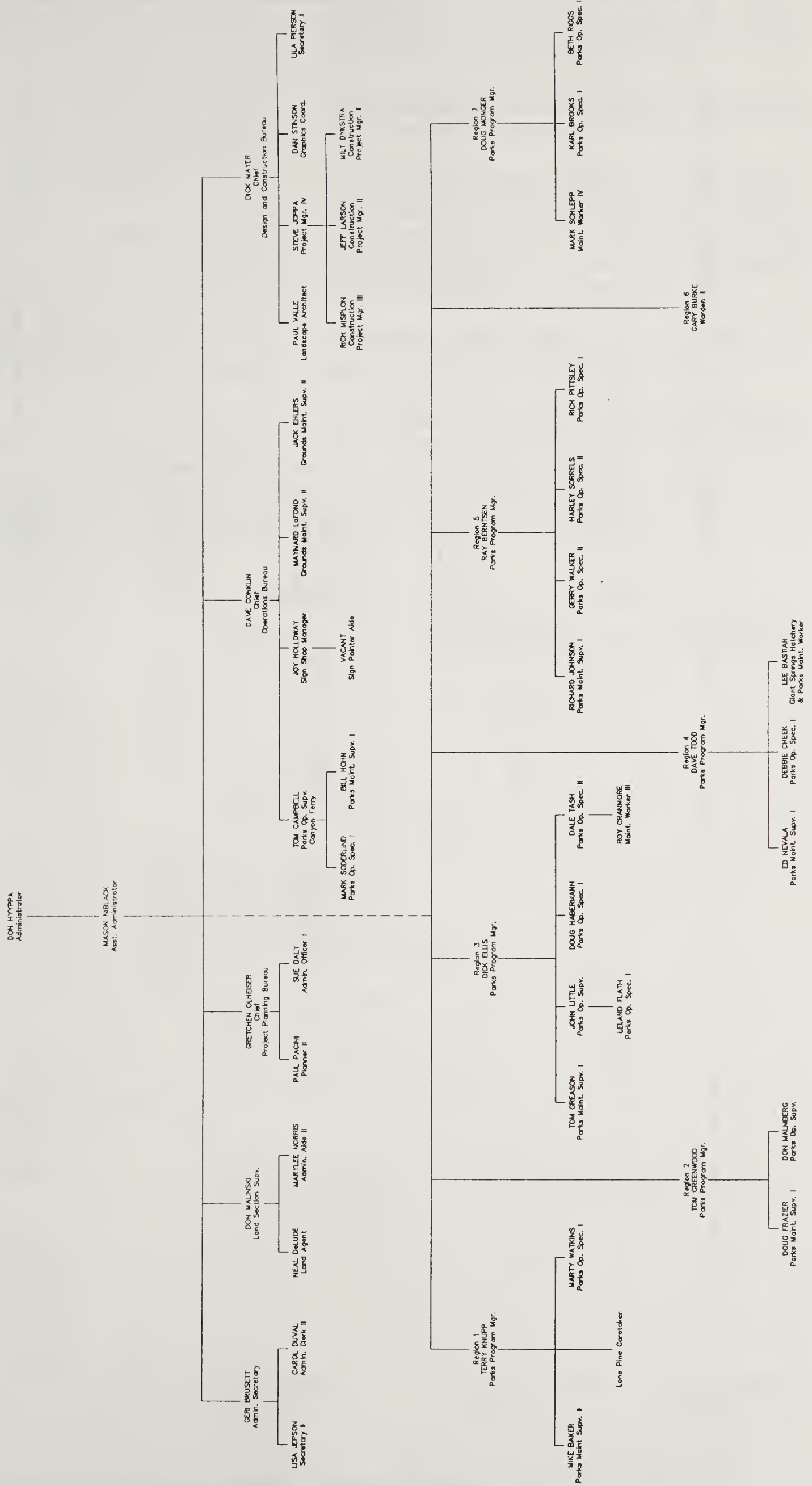
## **FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES**

On January 1, 1987, the Parks Division changed its operations funding mix to more accurately track the Division's new program budget centers. This is a result of recommendations made in the 1985 Department Strategic Plan (described on page 38 of the January 1987 edition of *Parks Perspective*.)

The result has been a clarification of the use of earmarked funds for individual constituencies, legislatively mandated activities, and a stronger basis for annual budget planning and execution.

Since about 1963, a mix of fishing license and motorboat fuel tax revenue sources were used to fund parks and fishing access site operations projects in proportion to the type of recreation use as determined by on-site surveys and/or park manager observation. Additionally, if the project earned revenue, a portion of that earned revenue was returned to the project if it was of significant volume. As well, coal tax revenue was increasingly added to projects where shortages of other

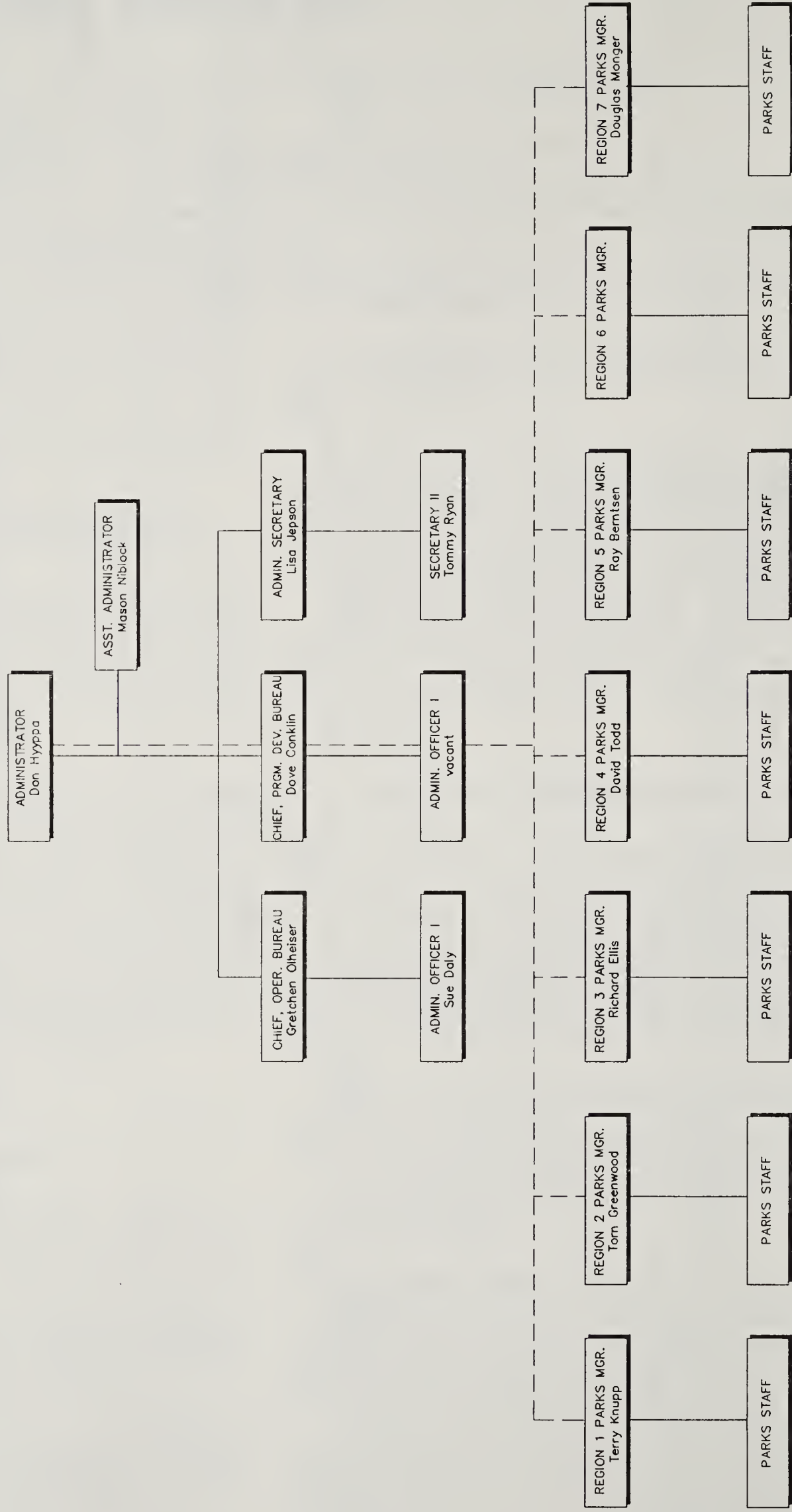
# Outset of 1987 PARKS DIVISION PERSONNEL CHART



# 1988 Personnel Chart

## PARKS DIVISION

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks





funding sources, such as from the general fund, were evident. Land-based parks (those not usable by motorboaters or fishermen) were funded by general fund, coal tax and earned revenue. Water-based parks, which have a wider variety of uses, were funded with a wider variety of revenue sources.

The Capitol Grounds maintenance program operates from its own revenue source; the Snowmobile Program receives fuel taxes and registrations fees; the Land and Water Conservation Fund program administration has been financed largely with general fund and coal tax.

As of January 1, 1987, all operations funding sources have been allocated to Fish Program and Parks Program projects according to major missions, with a formula for allocating earned revenue according to its source:

**Natural parks** · are funded by coal tax and a share of any revenue they earn.

**Cultural parks** · are also funded with coal tax and a share of any revenue they earn.

**Recreation parks** · are funded with motorboat fuel tax where motorboating is allowed and a share of any revenue they earn. Recreation parks where motorboating cannot occur are funded with coal tax.

**Fishing access sites** · are funded with sportsman license revenues.

The Capitol Grounds, Snowmobile Program, and Land and Water Conservation Fund administration will continue to be funded as in past years. The table below shows funding source allocations available in fiscal year 1987:

**Table V**

MISSION	OPERATIONS	CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT	CAPITAL ACQUISITION
<b><u>PARKS PROGRAM</u></b>			
<i>State Park System:</i>			
Natural Parks	0% General Fund 46% Coal Tax 38% earned revenues	-0-	-0-
Cultural Parks	0% General Fund 26% Coal Tax 1% earned revenues 100% Capital Grounds	-0-	-0-
Recreation Parks	0% General Fund 28% Coal Tax 61% earned revenues 100% motorboat fuel tax		-0-
<i>Heritage and Recreation Programs:</i>			
Snowmobile Program	Snowmo. Fuel Tax Snowmo. registr.	Snowmo. Fuel Tax Snowmo. registr.	-0-
Federal LWCF Program	Coal Tax	LWCF	-0-
<b><u>FISH PROGRAM</u></b>			
<i>Fishing access</i>			
	Gen. License 25% fish lic.	Gen. License LWCF	Gen. License 75% fish lic.

The allocation formula for earned revenue was adapted from the National Park Service 1987 Federal Budget Act proposal. Under this formula, earned revenue was re-allocated in the following manner for FY87:

**50% returned to individual park operations budgets:**

- 50% according to total budget
- 50% according to total revenue collections

**50% to Parks Program support:**

- 32% to Centralized Services
- 25% to Law Enforcement
- 43% to Parks Division
  - 50% Division Operations
  - 50% Sign Shop

This new budget allocation method will need refinement in the future. However, it is a major step forward in realigning revenue sources to respond to changing needs. During fiscal 1988, the Division will follow up on this effort by developing a proposal for allocating capital project funding sources by major mission as well.

In order to illustrate these changes, pie charts on the following page show Parks Division spending by revenue source and operating costs for fiscal year 1987 according to the program budget categories above.

## PLANNING AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION BUREAU

This bureau has a variety of responsibilities, among which are two grant programs: the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Snowmobile Program. Completion of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), as required by the LWCF program, is achieved within the Bureau, and Division planning is meshed with this responsibility. Administration of the Coal Tax Park Acquisition application program and Department cabin site leases are also Bureau responsibilities.

## THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

The LWCF is a federal program which provides grants to states and their political subdivisions for assistance in acquiring and developing public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Grants may be used to fund up to 50% of project costs.

The Department was designated the state agency responsible for this program in 1965 and the Parks Division was assigned responsibility for its administration. During the past twenty-two years, Montana has received \$29,524,020 from the fund. With at least a 50% matching requirement, this has resulted in over \$59,048,040 being expended on public outdoor recreation areas and facilities in the state.

During fiscal 1987, Montana appropriated \$311,052 in Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars. Approximately 50% of this allocation was utilized by local governments for the acquisition, development, and renovation of outdoor recreation facilities. The remainder of the allocation was earmarked for Fishing Access site improvements around the state.

Although the LWCF allocation to the state has incurred drastic cuts in recent years, enthusiasm and support for the program continues, evidenced by the fact that 41 local government grant applications, requesting over one million dollars, were received in 1987. Unfortunately, only four grants could be awarded as shown in Table VI.

**Table VI**  
**1987 Local LWCF**

Sponsor	Project	LWCF\$
Billings	Riverfront Park	\$51,500
Helena SD #1	Valley Park	20,600
Deer Lodge Co.	Softball Complex	51,100
Ronan Co.	Park & Ballfields	31,926
		155,526

The federal LWCF Act will sunset in 1989. In addition, a further reduction in the state share program of LWCF is being considered by Congress during 1989. The Department is therefore taking steps to ensure a smooth phase-out of the program, should it be necessary.



# Parks Division REVENUE

**\$3,294,875 – FY87**

## Heritage and Recreation Programs

Snowmobile Reg. Fees  
\$13,310

Snowmobile Fuel Tax  
\$282,476

LWCF  
\$133,589

License Revenues  
\$862,155

## Fish Program

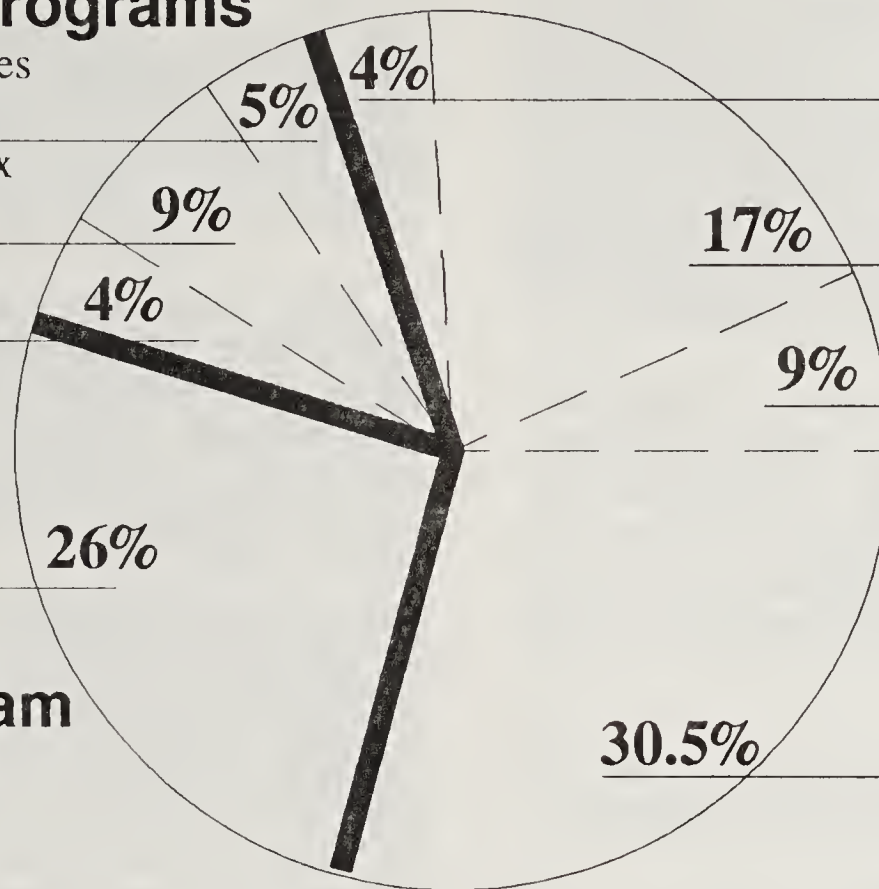
Capital Grounds  
\$144,266

Motorboat Fuel Tax  
\$557,693

Earned Revenue  
\$296,942

## State Park System

Coal Tax  
\$1,004,444



# Parks Division OPERATING COSTS

**\$3,294,875 – FY87**

## Heritage and Recreation Programs

LWCF  
\$165,882

Snowmobiling  
\$323,046

Fishing Access  
\$813,062

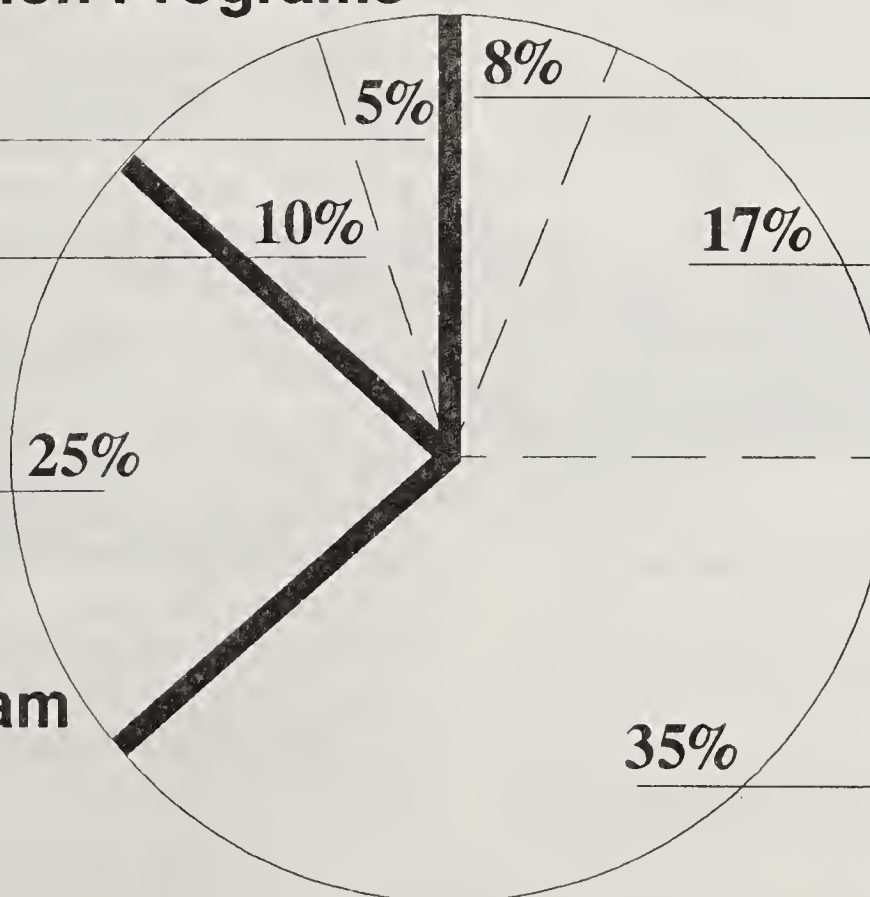
## Fish Program

Cultural  
\$270,914

Natural  
\$569,221

## State Park System

Recreation  
\$1,152,750





## **STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUT- DOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)**

In order to receive federal matching funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, each state must draw up a current plan for fulfilling its recreational needs. This plan must be thorough and include activities of all local, state, and federal agencies involved in recreation. Called the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the Planning and Project Bureau maintains and develops it for the State of Montana.

SCORP planning is a continuous process with a published report due every five years, the next one due in 1988. In addition, an annual action plan is required which describes planning accomplishments in the past fiscal year and anticipates projects for the coming year.

The abbreviated completion schedule for the published SCORP document is as follows:

- I. Inventory - complete.
- II. Evaluation of Issues - complete.
- III. LWCF Project Selection Process - complete.
- IV. Special Studies Section - complete.
- V. Addition of Wetlands Section - complete.
- VI. Finalization and printing, June-December 1987.

Personnel changes within the Parks Division left the SCORP planner position vacant early in the fiscal year. With the assistance of Parks field personnel, the 1988 SCORP is still on schedule.

## **THE SNOWMOBILE PROGRAM**

The Snowmobile program derives its revenue from two sources:

1. Snowmobile registration decal fees of \$2 each; and
2. Five-tenths of one percent of the distributor's gasoline tax.

To help defray the costs of administering the

program, 15% of this revenue goes to the Department's Centralized Services Division. The remaining money generated through the sale of registration decals is divided evenly between the Parks Division and the Law Enforcement Division for enforcement of snowmobile regulations. The remaining gasoline tax money is also divided with 90% going to the Parks Division and 10% going to the Conservation Education Division for snowmobile safety and education programs.

In fiscal 1987, \$231,008 was expended on operations, maintenance, repairs, development, and administration of Montana's Snowmobile Program. Of this amount, \$33,081 was spent for Department administrative expenses.

Equipment purchased in 1987 through the Snowmobile Trail Grooming Equipment Revolving Account included a new Tucker Sno-Cat 2000 Trail Groomer with a Maxi grooming implement for use in the Bozeman area at \$61,299; a Trail Master grooming implement for use on the hard packed, high-use areas in West Yellowstone for \$8,300; and a SkiDoo Alpine double-track snowmobile and grooming implement for use in the Bitterroot area for \$6,456.

A highlight of the year in the Snowmobile Program was the decision to decentralize its administration. A Snowmobile Program Operations Manual was developed and, on April 8, 1987, representatives from each of the snowmobile clubs participating in the state program, members of the Montana Snowmobile Association, and department regional park managers met to discuss the future of the program under regional administration. Feedback from that meeting has been positive and similar assemblies are planned for the future.

Also during this fiscal year, a three-way agreement was developed in cooperation with the northern regional office of the U.S. Forest Service in Missoula. This agreement is between local snowmobile clubs, the department, and the Forest Service, and outlines responsibilities within the Snowmobile Program.



As a result of the April 8 meeting, the deadline for submitting applications for consideration for the next season's funding was moved to May 1. Applications for 1988-1989 funds are due May 1, 1988 in the regional park manager's office.

Decentralization of administration of the program will allow more local contact and easier access to a regional park manager than before when all administrative contacts were through the state office in Helena.

With a \$ .02 state gas tax increase authorized by a special session of the legislature in 1986 and an additional \$ .03 gas tax increase coming out of the 1987 session, the Snowmobile Program should have funds available to adequately maintain not only over 2,600 miles of trails presently being groomed, but additional miles and connecting trail systems in the future. Maintenance of trail-grooming equipment is always an expensive priority, and will be better addressed with an increase in funding.

## THE COAL TAX

A complete history of coal severance tax use by the Parks Division is provided in previous editions of *Parks Perspective*.

As was true in 1987, coal severance tax revenues will continue to be diverted entirely to annual operations budgets rather than capital acquisition or development. The major reason continues to be that general fund support for the Parks Division was again eliminated by the 1987 Legislature.





# THE REGIONS

## Region 1 by Terry Knupp

Parks seasonal employee efforts in 1987 began with some organizational changes and increased training. Five park attendant positions were upgraded from grade 5 to grade 7 to provide cluster supervision of employees in geographically close sites. Maintenance staff also realigned supervisory structure to improve effectiveness. A two-day orientation session which included talks by the Regional Supervisor and Warden Sergeant was given at the Bitterroot Lions Camp Lodge. At this meeting, regional staff set goals for park projects and organized work efforts using developed standards and park priorities.

Individual division activities during 1987 included: 1) renewal of the lease for the youth camp portion of Bitterroot Lake SRA with the *Kalispell Area Lions Club*, 2) a one-year trial lease for operation of the campground portion of Bitterroot 3) completion of construction of a group picnic shelter at Lone Pine, 4) additional trail work and landscaping at Lone Pine, 5) construction of a chain link safety fence around the rotted and therefore closed mooring facility at Finley Point SRA, 6) contract construction of a new sewage system at Logan SRA (plus regional staff complete refurbishing of two comfort stations), 7) contract development of a parking lot at newly leased Beaver Lake FAS, 8) hazard tree removal at Thompson Falls and Logan SRAs, Yellow Bay, Blanchard FAS, and West Shore SRA, 9) reconstruction of a nature trail at Yellow Bay, 10) construction of a storage shed at Big Arm SRA, 11) installation of over 100 "wheel" stoves, 12) installation of numbered posts for site designation at every SRA, 13) reduced services at Elmo SRA and staffing the site with volunteer *Harold Woods* working with the *University of Montana recreation class* to remove beach drift wood at Wayfarers SRA, convening the Wild Horse Island Task Force which recommended the establishment of a "Limits of Acceptable Change" approach to island management,

extinguishing of two fires on the island and completing historical research on island homesteading.

## Region 2 by Tom Greenwood

Hannon Memorial Fishing Access Site was developed in 1987, the campground portion completed by the highway contractor in exchange for department land taken when re-routing Highway 93. A loop road, numerous parking spurs, entrance and approach roads were accomplished. Regional personnel along with the Missoula High School Forestry Class cleared, brushed, and removed numerous hazard trees. Tables, fire grills and a single latrine were also installed. The day use portion was completed by contract; signs, barriers, culverts, parking and boat launch were also installed.

A one way traffic gate system was installed at Chief Looking Glass FAS. With numerous camper complaints about the "after 10 p.m. crowd" disrupting paying campers, this seemed a good solution to the problem. It worked well, curbing traffic and vandalism at night.

Regional personnel, with the help of the *University of Montana Forestry CORE Program*, installed an elaborate float ramp at Roundup FAS. Treated timbers with two parallel ramps and belting provided an easy way for floaters using the Blackfoot River to launch and remove rafts in a location otherwise difficult to use for put-in and take-out.

A handicapped toilet was removed from Frenchtown and installed at the future Cyr bridge fishing access which is planned for development in 1988.

Brown's Lake FAS was graveled in coopera-



tion with *Powell County*. The region bought 2,000 yards of gravel and the Powell County crew with the region dump truck and crew, graveled the entrance road and one mile of county road leading to Brown's Lake.

Hazard trees were a priority for the regional maintenance crew. Over 70 trees at various sites were removed which were potential hazards to site users.

Other general projects included repair and painting of all picnic tables in the region, inside latrine painting, gravel in front of latrines, installation of 85 fire grills, and a changeover to new metal and wood signs at almost every site.

The regional parks crew cooperated with the *Hellgate Shooting Club* to make an exhibit for the Missoula County Fair. A first place ribbon was awarded for the display that illustrated the proposed Deep Creek State Recreation Area.

Transferred from Canyon Ferry SRA to the Blackfoot River Corridor in February 1987, Mark Soderlind ensured that activities on the river ran smoothly despite extremely low water conditions. As a result of land transactions, two new participants in the corridor agreement were added.

Montana State University again held a white water festival on the Blackfoot. It was well run and well attended.

### **Region 3 by Dick Ellis**

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Region 3 Park staff were involved in a diverse number of activities, reflecting the number and complexity of the sites managed.

In step with the trend toward more cooperative management, work on site and program projects was done with the *Forest Service*, *Twin Bridges Park Board*, *Montana Winter Fair*, *Human Resources Development Council*, *Montana Power Company*, *Montana State University*, *National Recreation and Parks As-*

*sociation*, and the *Three Forks Council of Boy Scouts* as well as many private individuals.

Region 3's historic resource was emphasized by participation in meetings of the *Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society*, *Montana Archeology Society*, *Lewis and Clark Trail Foundation*, and the *Native American Cultural Resource Workshop* at Camp Maiden. Historical research continued at Mount Haggin State Recreation Area, resulting in an updated slide presentation about this rich and varied historical site. The region responded to increasing mining activity threatening the fragile resource at Mount Haggin.

A man-caused fire burned 100 acres at Madison Buffalo Jump State Monument. The positive outcomes of this were that no facilities were damaged and the fire allowed excellent aerial photographs to be taken to generate better baseline data at the site.

As part of the statewide signing program, as well as a regional priority, existing signs were repainted or replaced at many sites. *Fisheries* and *Parks* personnel cooperated in placing warning signs on the Gallatin River to warn floaters of hazardous diversion structures. New outhouses were installed at Salmon Fly, Brownes Bridge, and Carters Bridge fishing access sites.

Following the death of *Louis Link*, who, with his wife *Ruth*, had been the concession operator at Lewis and Clark Caverns since 1946, negotiations began for a new concessionaire. Bannack State Park's new visitor center began operation, providing improved visitor information and service.

Land acquisitions included the purchase of two fishing access sites on the Big Hole River, one site on the Jefferson River, and acceptance of a donated parcel from the federal *General Services Administration*, on the Beaverhead River.



## **Region 4**

### **by Dave Todd**

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An open house for the new Regional Headquarters/Visitor Center, under construction throughout 1987, was held on June 30; a large group of dignitaries and well-wishers was on hand. A car-counter loop was activated on July 1 to track visitation; the results of July showed 5,860 vehicles and August showed 5,732. Multiplying these figures by an average of 3.4 persons per vehicle indicated 39,413 people visited our new office in just a two-month period.

Site protection projects at Pelican Point and Brewery Flats fishing access sites were completed, and a project at Bean Lake was completed with additional cattleguards being installed. The priority site protection project for 1987, Nilan Reservoir, was finally bid late in the fall, after lengthy negotiations with the DNRC and a neighboring landowner.

New self-pay systems were activated at James Kipp and Craig state recreation areas after a successful first year at Holter Lake. The region again utilized the *Great Falls High School* shop class to build collection boxes, a new handicap latrine for Nilan Reservoir, numerous fire-grills placed at Holter Lake and Recreation Road, and storage and work cabinets for the new headquarters shop area.

Regional maintenance crews completed several site improvement projects in the region. The *Walleyes Unlimited Club*, *Choteau County Commissioners*, and Landowner Vic Fatz, all cooperated in constructing a boat ramp, gravel parking area, and installing new signs at Carter's Ferry. A new water pump, road closure gate, and signing were installed at James Kipp. The Recreation Road sites and Giant Springs facilities received a much needed coat of paint and almost every site in the region received some type of new signing as part of the new statewide signing policy. Giant Springs also received a major tree pruning.

*Concerned Citizens for the Smith River Committee* continued meeting during fiscal 1987 with region staff and Planning Consultant Joel Shouse. Joel's contract was extended to complete the Smith River Management

Plan. The *Good Sam Club* of Great Falls again conducted a survey of Smith River floaters at Eden Bridge and provided information at Camp Baker. Their presence at put-in and take-out points allowed River Ranger Woody Baxter to spend more time patrolling the river and making landowner contacts. A cooperative agreement between the department and landowners have resulted in three leases allowing public use of private property for boat camps.

Region 4 Parks and the *U.S. Forest Service* again displayed exhibits at the State Fair in Great Falls. This year, the exhibit included a slide presentation of various park sites, the Rosebud Battlefield display, Wild Horse Island, Centennial Acre, and a vandalism diorama.

This was the third year in which area snowmobile clubs successfully administered grooming contracts at Kings Hill with new trails being cleared by club members and various new safety signs installed.

Ed Nevala and his maintenance crew continue to wage war against noxious weeds in Region 4. A four-wheel drive ATV and 50-gallon sprayer were purchased to help control these persistent invaders of park lands.

## **Region 5**

### **by Ray Berntsen**

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The D-J expansion program in Region 5 received much attention in the form of planning, land negotiations, and site design work by Parks during 1987. As a result, both the East Bridge in Billings and Riverside Park in Laurel are scheduled for construction of boat launching facilities in the spring of 1988. With the completion of these two facilities, recreational use of the Yellowstone River is expected to increase significantly.

Only one project in the Site Protection Program was targeted for completion this year. Construction at Mallards' Landing FAS, strategically located on the Big Horn River between the Big Horn FAS and Two Leggings FAS, was begun and will be completed by the publication of this report. The project will



culminate a six-year effort to provide access to an important stretch of the Big Horn River.

Pictograph Cave was the site of several small projects. The trail system constructed last year was sealed and additional trail stabilization completed. Pictograph was also the site of various service organization projects that added significantly to visitor enjoyment.

Various new projects and activities occurred at Lake Elmo as well. Interior work on the new entrance building, built last year by the *Naval Reserve of Billings*, was completed by mid-summer. Other donations from various clubs went toward road improvements and tree watering equipment. A master plan concept was discussed, but a draft was not completed, pending future land use determinations and solicitation of additional ideas and interest from the public. Lake Elmo continues to be an extremely popular SRA; Manager Jerry Walker has maintained a quality program without additional development or operations funding.

Buffalo Mirage FAS near Laurel received much attention this year due to recreationist/landowner conflicts. A draft management plan was produced and implemented to address some of the problems. Night closure, more frequent patrols by enforcement personnel, and more maintenance attention have eliminated some of the problems. Discussions on legal issues, such as right to public access, will continue.

As in other regions, a law enforcement plan specifically addressing parks enforcement was devised and a management plan for Cooney Reservoir was implemented. Other activities included improvements to shelter buildings, restrooms, fencing, self-pay system, and roads to campground locations around the reservoir. A hazardous tree elimination program was implemented, making Cooney a safer place to camp. The private concession contract at Cooney was terminated at the beginning of the summer, but a small country store near the reservoir has provided service for visitors to the area.

The Department and *Big Horn County* cooperated on developing the Arapooish FAS/

City-County park during the year. The result is a fine facility that serves both sportsmen and the general recreationist. Because of its proximity to Hardin, the site will likely continue to grow in popularity.

Land exchange negotiations begun in 1982 were finally completed at Captain Clark FAS. Pasture and crop land were exchanged for additional river frontage and bottom land for wildlife habitat.

Work on shelter buildings, fencing, and roads occurred at Deadman's Basin SRA. A cabin-owner cleanup day was scheduled with about one third of the owners joining in.

Continued efforts to control weed infestations on Department sites have been successful, and the use of both domestic sheep and goats for biological experiments in the region have received more attention this year. Rick Johnson, Parks maintenance supervisor for the region, served as a consultant to many interested public officials and landowners, effectively explaining our program.

In addition to his regular duties, Jerry Walker helped develop the 1988 SCORP for the Division and continued working with various people on development of an architectural plan for a new headquarters building.

## **Region 6**

### **by Joe Dilts**

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Fiscal 1987 was a hectic one for Region 6. After a shaky start, then loss of a parks manager, a great deal was nonetheless accomplished.

Faber Reservoir Fishing Access Site facilities were constructed and visitor improvements made to the Centennial Acre on the Schwinden property north of Wolf Point.

Landscaping at Region 6 headquarters was completed with the planting of grass around the building and installation of a sprinkler system. Much needed basic maintenance was completed at virtually every regional site.



A plan to lease an area at Nelson Reservoir to Sleeping Buffalo Lodge was initiated and will be completed early in 1988.

## **Region 7**

### **by Doug Monger**

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Financial cutbacks in the entire Division resulted in a maintenance reduction in the Region 7 parks system. Three maintenance employees were laid off and maintenance services were reduced at Rosebud Battlefield state monument, Medicine Rocks state park, Roche Juane fishing access site, South Sandstone, Rush Hall, Powder River Depot, and Pirogue Island. Park managers assumed routine caretaker duties and greater reliance was placed on visitors using self service fee collection systems. Park volunteers helped provide other important park functions.

Even with reduced budgets, certain tasks, such as control of noxious weeds, remain essential. Region 7 experimented with biological weed control, using goats to control leafy spurge at Powder River Depot. Other methods of control were also employed, such as contracting with county weed boards or using ATVs to access hard-to-reach infestations.

At Makoshika State Park near Glendive, a college student internship program was established with duties of volunteer interns to provide park interpretation, maintenance, and park tours. The Department also resumed management of the Makoshika Rifle Range; it was cleaned up, debris removed, new shooting standards installed, the shooting ports rejuvenated, and a self-service day-use fee established. Other activities at Makoshika included plumbing water to the campground, developing a draft radio tower management plan, continued work on the oil and gas management plan, and assisting two colleges doing archeological and paleontological studies within the park.

Construction and maintenance activities continued. Force account projects included extending the boat ramp at Roche Juane, building two miles of fence at the Rosebud

Battlefield, and signing a portage around a diversion dam on the Yellowstone River. Capital construction was accomplished by contracting to build access roads and boat ramps at Seven Sisters, Elk Island, and Myers Bridge fishing access sites.

As in other regions, Region 7 Parks operated the fishing access program under policy guidelines established by the Fisheries Division. Of six potential sites, two purchases were culminated: Kinsey Bridge Fishing Access Site at Kinsey and Diamond Willow Fishing Access Site where the Yellowstone River meets the North Dakota boundary.

Parks employees participated in training opportunities including a grazing seminar, CPR training, principles of management seminars, and computer training. Division personnel also participated in conservation officer duties, assisted the Fisheries Division at Intake collecting spawning walleye eggs, and with the Wildlife Division's Block Management program.





# 1988 ACTION PLAN

Department functions are governed by a Strategic Plan, containing program objectives for each Division. The current plan, written in 1985, calls for objective achievement date of 1990.

**Strategy:** Secure funding for Maintenance/Development/Acquisition

**Actions:**

- Develop slide presentation on major state park system issues to present to constituency.
- Begin using local community recreation surveys for ranking fiscal year 1989 grant applications
- Use Executive Planning Process (EPP) to solicit and select proposals which address major issues which can be funded by the 1989 legislature.
- Propose any needed changes in state laws to address major issues.
- Evaluate implementation of new program budgeting allocation formula
- Develop Montana Conservation Corps legislation and funding for conservation work and state park system development.

**Strategy:** Evaluate tourism benefits to State Park System

**Actions:**

- Aid in coordination of statewide tourism research and promotion efforts with \$4.5 million annual funding provided by new legislation through participation in the Research Projects Steering Committee of the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, University of Montana.

The following Parks Division Action Plan outlines strategies which the Division will pursue during fiscal 1988 to accomplish various of the objectives.

- Complete publication of a full color *Montana State Parks* gift book for state centennial celebration and constituency building efforts.

- Cooperate with the Montana Department of Commerce's \$35,000 inventory and comprehensive plan for a system of highway signs to provide tourist information.

**Strategy:** Assess economic impacts of Division programs

**Actions:**

- Complete snowmobiling economic and recreational impact study.

**Strategy:** Evaluate overuse/crowding issues on State Parks sites

**Action:**

- Complete On-site recreation survey of visitor preferences.

**Strategy and Action:** Decentralize administration of the Snowmobile Program to provide flexibility and better response to needs

**Strategy:** Evaluate division roles

**Action:**

- Revise policy guidelines for administration of the state park system to set

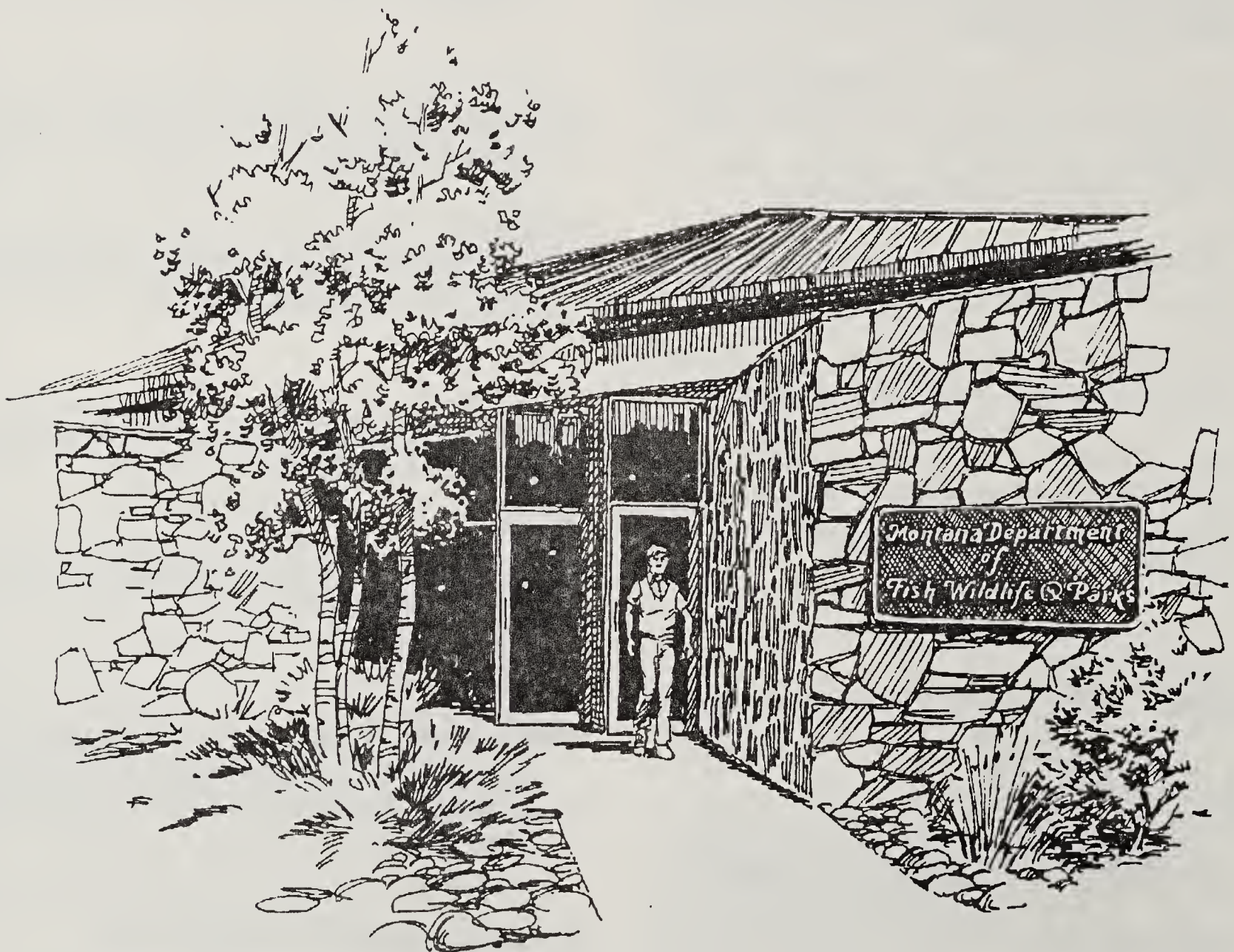


management standards which reflect visitor preferences and define intra and interagency responsibilities.

**Strategy:** Evaluate user fees and update system

**Actions:**

- Evaluate implementation of new allocation formula for parks earned revenue
- Develop alternatives for revising state parks user fee policy guidelines and develop support for necessary law changes.









***Montana Department of  
Fish, Wildlife & Parks***